

## Water Tupelo

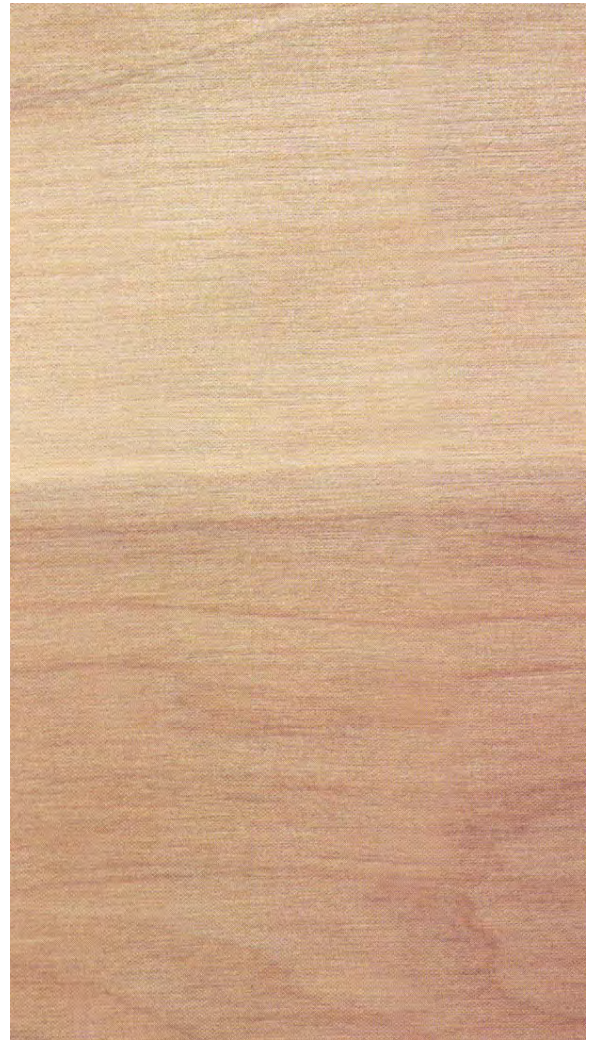
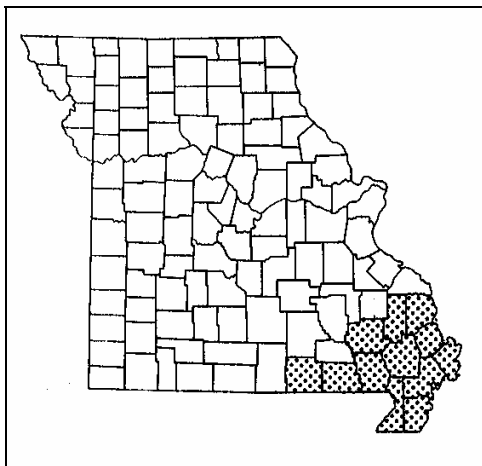
*Nyssa aquatica* L.

A Bootheel species, water tupelo, tupelo-gum, sour-gum, or tupelo grows in a limited range in southeast Missouri, mostly associated with extremely wet sites. In this habitat, it often develops a swollen butt on the trunk. On higher and drier sites, this swelling does not always occur.

Commercially, black gum is frequently combined with it, but the mixture is still generally referred to as "tupelo." Swamp black gum (*Nyssa sylvatica* var. *biflora* (Walt.) Sarg.) may also be included in this group.

The sapwood is nearly white to grayish white, merging into heartwood of greenish or brownish gray, or streaked with yellow and brown. The bark is dark brown, thin and rough, with scaly ridges. The growth rings are generally indistinct even under a hand lens and the wood is diffuse porous. The woods of all the gums are so nearly alike that no attempt is made to separate them. The texture is fine with a uniform grain that is usually interlocked. It is moderately hard, strong and difficult to split. The wood is average in machining, finishes well with paints, and glues satisfactorily. But it is difficult to dry and shrinks considerably with warping and twisting, and is not very stable.

The "tupelos" are used as veneer in berry boxes and similar containers. They have been used as slack cooperage, railroad ties, boxes, crates and pallets, in furniture (particularly for concealed parts), mouldings and trim, woodenware, factory floors and novelties. A wood of limited availability and difficult to dry, tupelo is not recommended for home workshop use.



Hoss

